

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested. Claims 1, 3-8 and 10 have been amended. Claims 11-17 have been added. Support for the additions and the amendments may be found throughout the specification. No new matter has been added. Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1-17, as amended, will be pending.

Claims 1, 5-8, and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as indefinite. Claims 1-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 4,602,079 to Vinches *et al.* ("Vinches"). Claims 1-8 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Vinches in view of U.S. Patent 5,840,782 to Limerkens *et al.* ("Limerkens").

With respect to the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection, the Examiner acknowledges that Vinches does not teach ("recite") foam formation (See Office Action at page 4, last paragraph). Accordingly, Vinches does not teach or suggest a foam, much less a microcellular foam of the present invention and therefore does not anticipate the present invention.

Similarly, with respect to the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection, Limerkens does not overcome the noted deficiencies of Vinches in that it does not teach or suggest a microcellular foam of the present invention. In addition, there is no motivation to combine the teachings of Vinches with the teachings of Limerkens. For at least these reasons, there has been no *prima facie* case of obviousness established.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

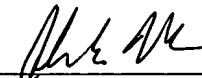
Therefore, all objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney for Applicants at the telephone number indicated below in order to expeditiously resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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